(c) Providing international connectivity from different airports is a matter of the Central Government and is decided during bilateral air services consultations at Government level based on reciprocity. The competing demands from other States are also kept in mind.

(d) Cochin has been granted as a point of call to Oman Air and Silk Air (Singapore). Apart from this Emirates Airline of Dubai has also been granted access to Cochin effective September, 2002. Therefore it will be incorrect to say that Cochin is being ignored while considering demands of foreign airlines for additional points of call. The requests of other airlines such as Yemen Airways, Qatar Airways, Saudia, Gulf Air, Sri Lankan Airlines, Uzbekistan Airways will be discussed during bilateral discussions with their respective Governments as and when held.

Drop in business of Indian Airlines

*212. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of drop in number of passengers, number of flights, number of employees and total revenue in Indian Airlines during the first six months of 2001-02 as compared to previous year; and

(b) the action Government are planning to take to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) There has been no drop in passenger carriage, flights operated and revenue earned by Indian Airlines including Alliance Air, its wholly owned subsidiary in the first six months of the current financial year as compared to the corresponding months of the previous year. The details are as under:—

	(April—Sept., 2000)	(April—Sept., 2001)
No. of passengers Carried (in lakhs)	35.75	36.67
Flights Operated	46812	47885
Total revenue earned (Rs. in crores)	2042.93	2173.98

The number of employees in Indian Airlines including SHOD and Alliance Air has, come down from 21453 at the end of September, 2000 to 21016 at the end of September, 2001.

(b) Indian Airlines has taken / propose to take the following steps to further improve its performance:—

— Deployment of aircraft based on the present market requirement.
— Continuation of ban on recruitment for other than those required for operational reasons.
— Cost control.
— Acquisition of aircraft on lease to replace / augment the aircraft capacity.
— Market responsive flexi fare policy.
— Strict Budgetary Control.
— Improvement in the quality of product.
— Innovative marketing strategies.

Vacant posts in PSUs

†*213. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that posts above the category of class IV are lying vacant since long in various companies under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas;

(b) if so, since when these posts are lying vacant and the details of action taken so far to fill up the vacant posts; and

(c) the time by when all the vacant posts are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (c) Posts are created in Public Sector Oil Companies as per their requirement. Filling up of vacancies caused on account of superannuation or otherwise is an ongoing process. It may, therefore, not be possible to indicate exact time frame for filling up all the vacancies.

New growth centres in North Eastern region

*214. SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question 541 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 24th April, 2001 and state:

(a) the number of growth centres Industrial Infrastructure Development Centres and Export Promotion Industrial Parks set up until 31st March, 2001 giving details, State-wise list and also the amount spent for each one; and

(b) the number of such centres which are proposed to be established during the year 2001-2002?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.